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Philosophy of Education

My name is Megan Millette and this is the story of who I am and who I will become. One may ask how one would know who she will become, but trust me; I have done the brainstorming and thinking that has led me to this point. I started as a naïve student in kindergarten anticipating school to be a place of fun and enjoyment. Though at some moments in my life it did not live up to this expectation, for the most part, I feel as though school lived up to my expectations. I have had my fair share of struggles and doubts in myself, but this is something we must overcome to be who we are in the end. All my life, I have had dreams and am commonly referred to as a dreamer with my head in the clouds. There is a difference between what others think when they see me dreaming, and what I think as I am dreaming. I know that in a matter of time these dreams will be made a reality for me, because I strive for what I want and always have. Though they may assume my dreams are not going to happen as I plan, I know that I will soon make these dreams a reality.

My true dreams are to be a teacher who makes a difference in the classroom, and a novelist of young adult literature. I want to not only teach my students but also form a close relationship with them, so I can have the most impact on their lives. I have wanted to teach since I was a child, playing school in my basement with my younger brother as the prized pupil. I have loved teaching and have spent many moments of my life teaching peers and younger students. One day soon, I will become this teacher who works in students lives, during the hardest time in one's life. I want to teach the middle and high school age students, because while they are left thinking about their future and who they are. I want to be there to guide them and help them learn as much as they possibly can about who they are, what they like, how to succeed, and how to be successful in the classroom and beyond the classroom. I want to prepare my students not only for education in the

classroom, but also for life past the four walls that act as barriers to the outside. In some ways, I want to be the teacher who breaks down those barriers and lets my students take in the reality that surrounds them.

I am currently studying at the University of Maine in Farmington for a degree teaching secondary education in the subject area of English. My education here has given me the opportunity to grow in my own philosophy. I have benefitted tremendously from my education here by developing the skills needed to help my students think deeply and explore the subject area of English more in depth. The classes here have allowed me the ability to think more deeply about a text and really analyze it in a more thoughtful way. I have been given many skills such as this that I can implement in my own classroom. I have not only learned from the content, but also from the strategies of the professors. The ways in which these teachers conduct their classes have influenced me tremendously. The education classes have challenged me and really made me think about what kind of a classroom and education I wish to give my students. This has not only helped in shaping my philosophy but also my views on education and the content area of English.

Though I will be an English teacher, my ambitious mind does not want to only teach my students this content area. I want to do more for my students like work collaboratively with other teachers to teach life skills and co-teach in hopes to connect students to different content areas at the same time to better grasp the concepts and lessons I teach them. As a teacher, it is my mission to make English more interesting to all my students because I am well aware that it will not always be my students' favorite class. I want to change their views by giving them many different opportunities to learn the information. When I was a student, I too struggled with reading and trying to work through the classics. I plan to teach my students using many mediums and ways in which to teach. I want to take my class into reality and show them how these classics can relate to them personally. I will do this by teaching them using films, movie clips, art, music, young adult

novels, current events articles, poetry, lyrical pieces, and other texts that may help them better understand. I do not want to have my classroom set up in boring rows, where I merely lecture to my students. I can see my classroom set up being fairly unique. I want to rearrange my classroom everyday in a way that will help aide my students be set up for the activities of the day.

When I was a student in high school, one of the most influential classes I had was a perspectives in literature class. It was not because I loved English or because I loved the teacher, even though both were true. It was because I, as a student, was given the opportunity to choose my education. I was given a voice in the class. This high school teacher told us what we needed to read for the class requirements and he gave us the choice when it came to all the other aspects of the class. As a class we decided to connect all the texts to a horror unit; he took these texts and connected them to many other mediums such as horror films, music, a young adult novel related to horror that we choose as a class, documentaries, and much more. He made the class far more interesting. His form of final assessment to see what we learned throughout the course was a list of different ideas ranging from a paper to movie. I had chosen to take the elements of horror and the texts we used to create a brief summary of a horror film. I continued by creating a cast and soundtrack for this creation. I made a movie poster to advertise. It was the most exciting project, and I felt like I had a strong grasp on what was being taught. Due to this experience, I feel as though I too want to give my students a voice. There are many areas in which one cannot be given the opportunity to make decisions because of the requirements they need to fulfill. However, there are areas within the learning experience where students can be given a voice and chance to choose. This is what I wish to do, working collaboratively with my students to help gain the most from every class.

One is more apt to enjoy a class when given the opportunity to have a voice of their own. Through many of my readings in this class, I have been given the opportunity to hear the different

voices of others discuss education. It is through these many opinions and readings from this class that helped me in formulating my own philosophy of education. The voices of the many philosophers out there seem to hold many good aspects that when combined together makes the philosophy I can see myself fitting into my classroom. In Locke's philosophy he claims, "We are born with faculties and powers, capable almost of anything; as it is in the body, so it is in the mind, practice makes it what it is." This statement clearly agrees with my thoughts about having multiple mediums to help in teaching a subject. This allows my students the opportunity to practice what is being taught. It is helpful in allowing them the opportunity to grasp the concepts being learned and discovered. As DuBois states, "education must not simply teach work—it must teach Life," I want to be the teacher who connects what is being learned to my students' lives and interests because they are more apt to obtain more information. The words of those before me have helped shape my opinion such as Counts' most memorable quote stating, "I am convinced that teaching is the greatest profession in terms of service to our people and to all mankind. Also I think it is the most interesting and challenging of all occupations." This helps me better understand this career I look forward to doing every day. I am honored to be calling myself a teacher.

As a teacher, I see myself taking the words of the wise into heart. They helped me better understand who I am, the pragmatist. This is due to the fact that I always find myself wondering how I can incorporate all disciplines in my classroom to help my students get the most out of the content I am teaching. I also want to implement multiple ways to discover one subject area due to the fact that this is a good way to help them learn all they can. I am a hands on learner who learns best through organization, discussion with others, and working with subject matter in multiple ways. I would have benefited from a class based on pragmatist beliefs, and this is most likely why I associate with this belief. I was never the type of person who learned through memorization or

by reiterating what teachers said. I had to be the one experimenting and exploring the possible answer in multiple ways, so I would not get bored and give up. I want to someday incorporate the elements needed to help my students learn as much as they can, which means I will be flexible in creating a system of methods that are uniquely different but all help them explore a new topic. I want to inspire them and get their opinion on the class. I want a system that is student-based because that is the way in which one is able to get the best results from students. I want to encourage students to do different projects that demonstrate their learning in the best possible way. My students will be able to discuss with peers different subject matters, as well as, work on their own to come to a conclusion. Variety is key in exploring a subject and topic to the fullest, and this is what I believe pragmatists do. This is the reason why I feel as though I associate with them more so than any other philosophy.

I am not sure I follow one philosophy laid out by one of the philosophers. Instead, my mind is a collage of different aspects of what these philosophers have chosen to share with others. I am interested in the ideas presented by Socrates stating students must discover and question with the teacher to help learn and achieve an education. In this aspect of understanding, there needs to be exploration to develop a strong education. In Jesus' philosophy, the concept of having many activities is crucial in the classroom. As teachers, we need to engage our students in a variety of ways, so these students are able to have ample opportunities to delve deeply into a subject and gain knowledge. As educators, we need to take into consideration the knowledge students already have and grow on this, so there is a progression in learning. This will make students engaged and alert. Hildegard also touches upon this saying that education should be more active, allowing students to dive into diverse topics in new ways using art, truth, and culture to discover new ideas. As seen in many of the philosophers' statements, I want to also encourage students to go further using hands on activities, questions, multiple ways of learning, and comfortable atmospheres. If I

want the best results in my classroom, I need to find what fits my way of teaching and remember to look for the best possible way to educate students. Similarly to what Sappho's philosophy claims, I want to think about teacher and student relationships. I plan to believe each student is important to the learning atmosphere. I want students to know I care and have their different ways of learning in mind. I want to have a relationship with my students, so all can feel comfortable in my classroom. There are so many educational issues being presented in the world of education, and I need to remember to have my students best interests in mind when I look further at these issues.

One way in which I plan to keep my students in mind and create a positive learning experience is by implementing Discipline with Dignity into my classroom. Discipline is an issue in the classroom. Many students are falling behind or acting out in class, and I will be more apt to prevent this by implementing Discipline with Dignity into my classroom. This will give students a voice in my classroom while also helping all feel comfortable and safe. This will help with setting guidelines and having students follow these guidelines, because my students will be participating in the rules and repercussions they must face if they do not follow the rules. This means that my class will be more apt to be engaged and have positive atmosphere for instruction, allowing my students to feel welcome and know that I care about them. However, in order for me to use this effectively, I must be like Augustine suggests in his philosophy as this role model. I must also follow the guidelines and rules we have established for the classroom. This will allow me to be a positive encouragement to all students.

I hope to overcome the educational issues presented by being constantly aware of what is happening in the field of education while also making my students aware of the methods that can best help them learn. For instance, if a student of mine is having issues with the basic classroom setting, I would be more than happy to tell that student and the parents about alternative schools

while also helping them apply if needed. If a student is bored with the material and needs a challenge, I would probably use a method like authentic curriculum. This is beneficial in many ways such as it creating an environment in which students are excited to learn, because they have choices and a challenge. This means fewer students will be dropping out or disengaged in my class. It creates positive environments amongst teachers and students. It also creates a version of creativity and ambition in students to help them perform at the level I know is possible. I also want to give my students the opportunity to evaluate me as a teacher at the end of every semester. I want students to know I have their best interests in mind, and I am trying to keep them intrigued.

My philosophy on education will have a great impact on many areas of the classroom. I am a clipboard at heart, which was discovered two years ago as a sophomore in college before I even thought of having my own classroom. This has shown me the person I am, but it has also helped in shaping my philosophy and ideas on teaching throughout the rest of my college career. I plan on having an organized class that has the main focus being on students and their different ways of learning, much like my ways of learning are clipboard and puppy meaning I learn best around others and must have an organized list of what is to be done in a given day. As a future educator, I plan to have my class organized in such a way that caters to what type of learner each student, having them seated in a way that will benefit them the best. As explained before, I care about students and having a productive and comforting classroom. I want to feel welcome and safe, which is what I would imagine my students would also want. This is one of the many aspects of the classroom I strive for this safe learning environment that is not a distraction, instead engages my students' want for knowledge and understanding. This is the main reason behind the organization of my classroom to make it a great learning environment that inspires and motivates.

I will do this by setting up the desks in the best way possible for what is being done that day. I will make sure there is a clear list of instruction, so students who want organization will

have an understanding on what I hope to cover in our class time. I want them to be active members in the class and know they have a voice that can be heard, so I will sit at their level and we will work together on disciplinary rules and guidelines for the class to follow. I want my students to feel as though there is no dumb question and that everything they have to say is important so I plan on applauding them for the thoughts they bring forward and find nice ways to critique off topic responses. I want to give us time in class to work together and individually so that way depending on one's best learning environment we are all satisfied and learning. The key importance for me as a teacher is to find the best way to get as much information across using diverse activities, so my students not only stay engaged but are growing in understanding and development in a subject area.

As an English teacher, I plan to do English type work such as vocabulary, reading, writing, etc. However, due to my views on education, I feel as though it is important to have different instruction methods along with incorporating different subject areas to get the best results for students. I feel as though this will impact my class in a positive way because even if students struggle in English they will have multiple ways in which to discover the information. I also feel that English is a diverse topic that is flexible and can be easily combined with other subject areas to get better results in understanding material. As a student in high school and middle school, I remember struggling with some of the material. Due to this problem I faced, I have come up with ideas of how to relate the information to students better. I want to teach the classics but bring in other mediums to help embark on a further investigative study of these texts. I hope to relate it to art, music, movies or film adaptations, young adult literature, and so much more. I want my students to reach the goals set out by the school and what we have come up with collaboratively. The best way for them to do this is by giving them as many possibilities to get something out of the course as I can. This is why I wish to bring in these areas of art, as well as, with the idea that



many schools are cutting out art programs so by incorporating them into the classroom our students will get more variety and opportunity to find new ways of learning. I plan to use a diverse grouping of materials to teach students, because I feel as though it will have a positive impact on their learning. Due to my experience, I want to incorporate this in my classroom because it helped students benefit in the past and gave them a voice in their education. It had a positive impact in motivating students, making the classroom open for all to discuss, and helped students grow and learn in more than just the content area of English.

As stated before, I want my students to have choice. I want to assess them in multiple ways and see the many ways in which they can excel and succeed. I believe with choice and options, we are setting our students up to succeed and gain more information from the material, because they are engaged and making their own decisions. I want to give different forms of assignments and projects that deal closely with what is being done in class, but also challenges them to think in new and exciting ways. Variety in assessment will have a positive impact on my classroom and my students. Students are more engaged and proud of the work they have done when they feel as though they have a choice in the matter. If I were to constantly assign quizzes for the vocabulary and reading my students would lose interest and not bother. It also would not show a very accurate representation of how they are doing and what they are learning because some learners are not good with tests and quizzes. These students would not benefit from one form of assessment and eventually it will lead them to not caring. If, I, instead, do a quiz sometimes but have them write a paper or creative story using the vocabulary they learned, it could be far more exciting and engaging to the students. If I were to take this a step further and have them come up with a game that uses the vocabulary, this would get them collaboratively working together, engaged, and taking their knowledge to the next level where they do not just reiterate words and definitions but implement them into a game then it is far more enjoyable. I will be able to assess them in multiple

ways and it will help both the students and myself branch into a new branch of learning which is this idea of applying what we know to something constructive. When it comes to assessment it is always important to have multiple means of assessment because it has the best impact on student learning and understanding.

This being said it is important to have resources as a tool to help students. I really want to incorporate technology in my classroom because I believe it is a beneficial tool in the classroom. I want my students to get creative with their learning and one way in which we can do this as a class is using technology. I feel as though technology integration is key when it comes to the classroom and learning. It allows us the opportunity to go beyond the given text and discussion into a realm of new possibilities and understanding. Technology will have a positive impact on my classroom. I certainly do not want to make it the focus of education; however, I want it to be a tool we can all use. Students could use it for a part of the variety of assessments. I could use technology to show my students the different mediums and content areas I wish to incorporate in our learning process. It will give us helpful tools to use in discussions and when presenting ideas. It allows us the opportunity to look at others opinions on English and learning. It is a wonderful tool that allows there to be more variety in the classroom, which I personally enjoy. It also helps me see the different learning and levels of understanding my students have reached. This is why I believe it is such a positive impact on the classroom.

With all of these different areas of understanding and teaching the teacher must remember the way in which they want to run the classroom. As a teacher, I want to keep in mind that I am in charge and what the leadership roles will be for me. I want to be the instructor teaching them the important knowledge they wish to know; however, I also was to be the facilitator by letting them apply it to their lives and move past just learning it. I want my students to have a voice and be heard as well as I want to have a voice and be heard. I plan on allotting time in the class in such a

way that this happens for both, my students and myself. I will lay out the goals and such and they will give me their input. I believe a collaborative leadership plan will give me the best results as a teacher, because the best way to know what students are thinking and where students are in their learning is by listening to what they have to say and asking them. This is the way in which I believe I will have the greatest improvements and best impact on my classroom and teaching.

These are just some of my many beliefs I wish to incorporate and work towards in my classroom. I believe they will all have positive impacts on the many areas of my classroom. These points will help me succeed in educating my students as best as I possibly can. This is who I am and will become in my career in education. This is my philosophy of education and the way in which I will implement it into my classroom.